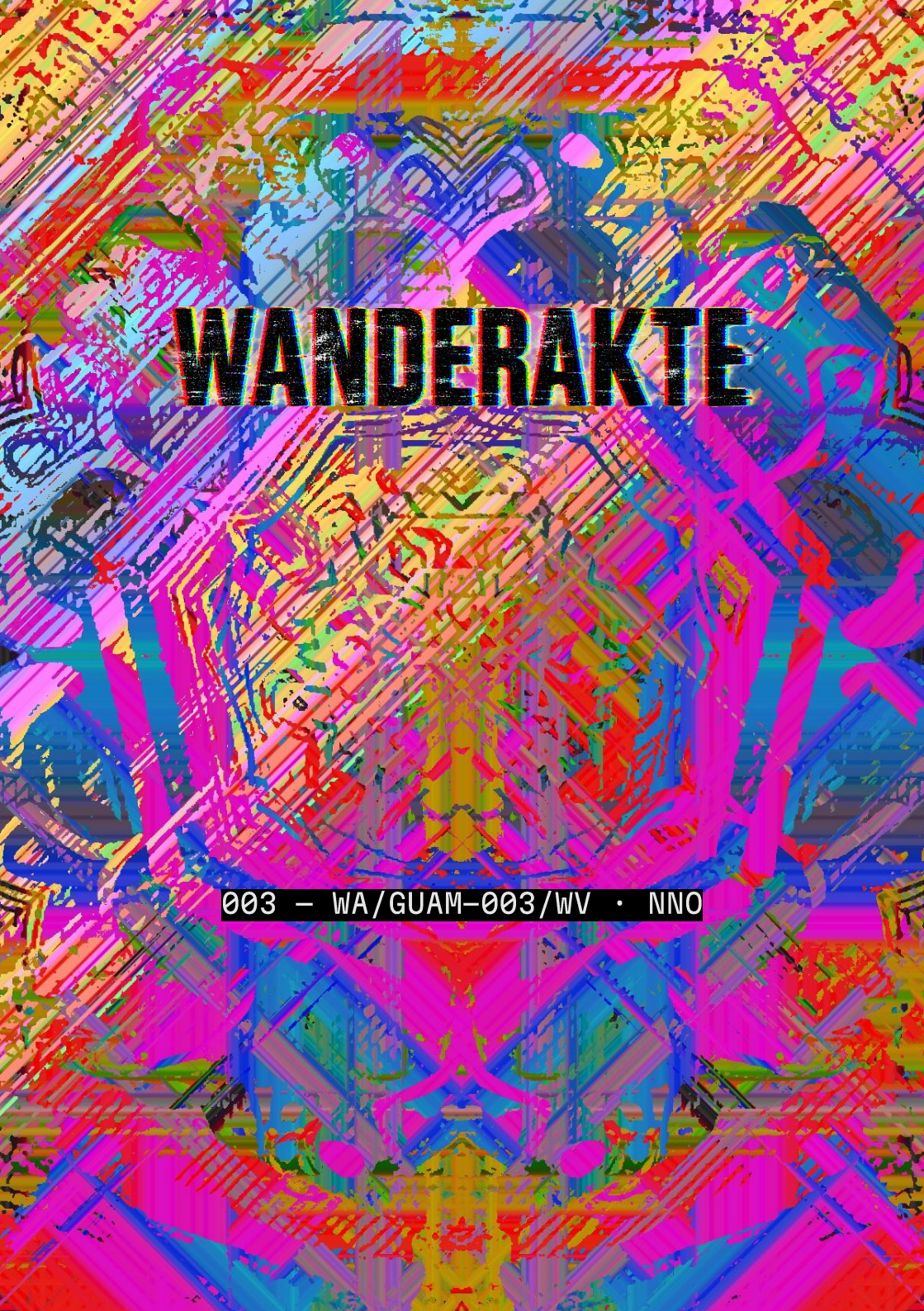
WANDERAKTE
003 — WA/GUAM-003/WV · NNO

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A Journal of Administrative Gothic
& Bricolage World-Building

The operation traces back to 1979, when its eight-year-old publisher sat on his father's lap in a cubicle of the Honeywell Welfare Information Network, hardwired to a Level 6 minicomputer the size of a deep freeze. By 1980, that same system, paired with a rented Xerox 914 (shipped with a fire extinguisher, just in case), was repurposed to blow up Portsmouth Herald alligator photographs into 11×14 punk art brut posters, distributed unauthorized around town. The operation did not go unnoticed. The publisher fled to Canada, later returning as an old lobsterman. His father has spent the past forty-seven years in hiding in a Vermont cabin.

Out of this came Doctor Zhai's Almanac, Being a Curious Vessel Containing Anything and Everything, which debuted in 1984. The Almanac gave way to Fowl Feathered Review (2012–2026), published under the imprint Fowlpox Press. Its

first 34 issues and chapbook catalog—including two under the Nathaniel S. Rounds pen name—remain archived at fowlpoxpress.yolasite.com.

In 2020, as the pandemic locked down the world, Fowlpox Press rebranded as Fire Agate Press and took a back road. For the duration of COVID-19, it published three color-coded serials, all registered with Library and Archives Canada and archived via AnyFlip. The flagship was La nécessaire déconstruction de l'éphémère (ISSN 2563-1713), a French/English quarterly that ran six issues, edited by Virgil Kay with Jack Ketch as poetry editor and Paris Pâté handling art and layout. Printed under the fictive imprint of Hen Island, Port Midjan, Atlantic Canada, it was "distributed" from the amphibious vehicle Oruktor Amphibolos.

Alongside it ran two unnumbered, ISSN-less one-offs: The Tidal Mouth Expositor (№ 537), edited by Theodorus Mávros with Paris Pâté on layout and artwork, and The Roundelay Warbler (№ 587), edited by Welton Schauung, who framed the issue as a cyclopaedia project derailed by his sister Anne.

Publishing then passed to The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition (successor to Fowlpox Press, and not to be confused with its now-defunct sister operation, the Spring-Wound Mammoth Waffle Coalition). The Coalition inherited a warehouse of unused index cards—pre-ruled, pre-stamped, pre-abandoned—from Mail Order Broth & Bratwurst LLC, a defunct supplier of gallon broth and bratwurst by the dozen. The cards, originally meant for order tracking, became the substrate of the archive. Every citation in this catalog is filed on Mail Order Broth & Bratwurst stock, the company name still legible on the reverse in small type, like a watermark refusing to fade.

Rule stamped on every card in the system:

IF IT EXISTS, FILE IT. IF IT DOESN’T EXIST, FILE THE NOTE SAYING SO.

The cards outlived their purpose.
The vessel outlived its names.
The archive outlived the pandemic.

OBJECTIVES

WANDERAKTE is devoted to Administrative Gothic and Bricolage World-Building.
We publish fiction, poetry, essays, visual art, invented scholarship, municipal folklore, impossible ethnographies, neighborhood cosmologies, documentary fantasies, archival recoveries, procedural myths, and literary artifacts assembled from the overlooked machinery of ordinary life.

We are drawn to stories that emerge from local history, civic infrastructure, institutional language, vernacular knowledge, found objects, forgotten manuals, field guides, maps that have failed at their one job, radio broadcasts, View-Masters, storefronts, zoning disputes, maintenance logs, discarded catalogs, public notices, and neighborhood traditions.

Our guiding assumption:
The archive is a neighborhood.
The neighborhood is a forest.
The forest, on the map we're currently using, is Guam.

THE STAFF (Sink-Custodians / Function-Bearers)

- Virgil Kay: Final Arbiter // Driver of Record.
- Silent Bill: Overseer of Tactical Non-Sequiturs // Navigator, Nominal.
- Unkie Bob: Assigned to Casual Entropy // Conductor, Unlicensed.
- The Unnamed Dishwasher: Kerntriebwerk (core engine). Prolonged observation is discouraged, particularly at highway speed.

Published at irregular intervals, from wherever Larry has last come to rest. Larry is a 1961 GM 4106, formerly of the intercity coach lines, now serving as the magazine's permanent (if unregistered) editorial offices.

Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.
— Virgil

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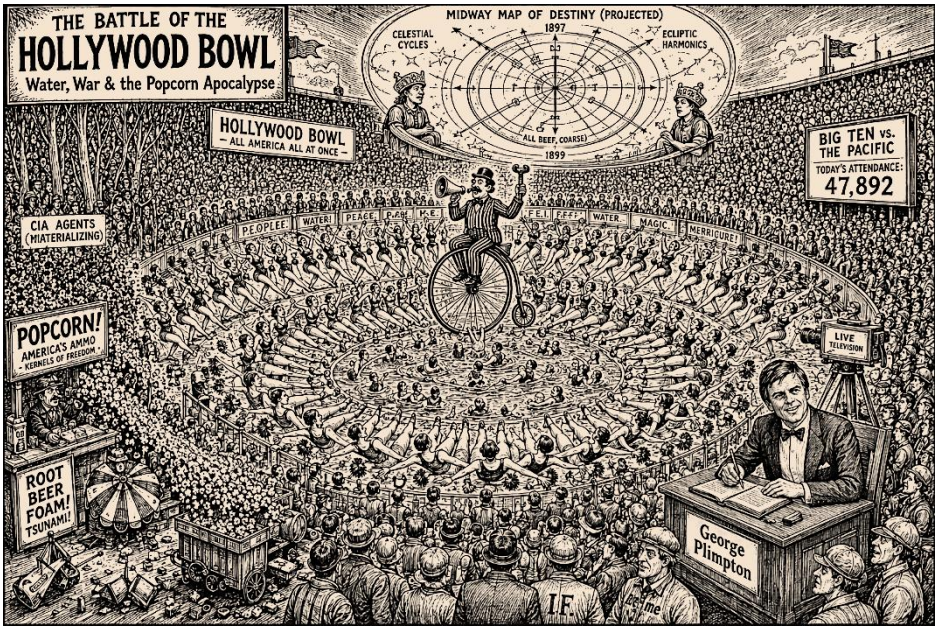

THE BATTLE OF THE
HOLLYWOOD BOWL
Water, War & the Popcorn Apocalypse
MIDWAY MAP OF DESTINY (PROJECTED)
1897
CELESTIAL CYCLES
ECLIPTIC HARMONICS
ALL BEEF, COARSE!
1899
HOLLYWOOD BOWL
— ALL AMERICA ALL AT ONCE —
BIG TEN vs. THE PACIFIC
TODAY'S ATTENDANCE:
47,892
CIA AGENTS (MIATERIALIZING)
PEOPLE!
WATER!
PEACE
PARK
K.E.
FEL
FEET
WATER
MAGIC
MERRIFURE!
POPCORN!
AMERICA'S AMMO
- KERNELS OF FREEDOM -
LIVE TELEVISION
ROOT BEER FOAM! TSUNAMI!
George Plimpton
I.F.

THE BATTLE OF THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL: A HYSTERICAL TREATISE ON WATER, WAR, AND THE POPCORN APOCALYPSE

By GE Phillips

CHAPTER ONE: IN WHICH THE BIG TEN DISCOVERS THAT CIVILIZATION IS JUST FOOTBALL WITH BETTER STATIONERY (AND A TERRIBLE HANGOVER)

There are universities, and then there are universities that have looked into the abyss of academic rigor, blinked, and decided to build a colossal, sweating cathedral of leather, mud, and Midwestern neurosis instead. The Big Ten. Oh, but Big Ten is such a pedestrian name for what is essentially a hereditary aristocracy of wool sweaters and concussive enthusiasm, isn't it? A small republic where the constitution is written in chalk dust and the national anthem is the sound of thirty thousand people holding their breath while a young man

runs into another young man at speeds that defy both physics and common sense. STEL-L-L-L-L-A-R IMPACT. Black screen. Then—WHAM. A 16mm archival frame of a wool-swathed fullback from Purdue taking a helmet to the sternum, blown up to IMAX proportions, grain so thick you could chew it. Eisenstein doesn't want a narrative; he wants a riot. He wants the proletariat to rise up against the forward pass. CUT TO: A pile of greasy leather helmets rolling down the steps of a concrete amphitheater like severed heads in a French Revolution newsreel. CUT TO: Amos Alonzo Stagg's face superimposed over a spinning tractor wheel. CUT TO: A statistical ledger from 1938 bursting into flames in slow motion.

They had been perfecting this trick since the nineteenth century, back when football was merely a barbaric pastime for gentlemen who enjoyed having

their ribs rearranged by strangers, and the faculty—those poor, bewildered souls—were still debating whether the whole enterprise was education, manslaughter, or a clever way to keep the boys from setting fire to the dormitories.

But rules! Ah, rules! The first unmistakable sign that civilization has arrived, dragging its knuckles and demanding order. Someone looked at the chaos of men throwing themselves at each other and said, "Gentlemen, let us quantify this madness." Rules meant eligibility. Eligibility meant records. Records meant archives. Archives meant historians. Historians meant monuments. Monuments meant television. Television meant money, that golden, corrupting nectar that flows through the veins of America like high-octane gasoline. And money, my dear, money always, always leads to somebody in Los Angeles deciding that an Olympic

swimming pool looks infinitely more respectable where a football field used to be. It was inevitable. It was written in the stars, or perhaps in the ledger books of a particularly ambitious athletic director. By 1964, the Big Ten had accumulated enough legends to constitute a pantheon of demi-gods made of grit and gravy. Amos Alonzo Stagg was no longer a man; he was a principle of thermodynamic inevitability. Fielding Yost floated through the American imagination like a ghost in a cardigan. Knute Rockne had achieved that peculiar American immortality where a dead coach is permitted to opine on technologies that hadn't been invented when he was busy dying.

And Red Grange? He wasn't a player. He was Red Grange, a proper noun that demanded capitalization and possibly a small tax deduction. Jesse Owens wasn't running; he was a historical argument with

quadriceps. Woody Hayes was a coach, which meant he was simultaneously a strategist, a moral philosopher, a walking weather system of rage, and, depending on which drunk alumnus you asked, either the savior of the soul or the reason God stopped answering prayers in 1958.

The Big Ten had a problem, you see. A glorious, terrifying problem. They had conquered football. They had organized it, quantified it, built colossal concrete bowls where tens of thousands of people paid to sit in the rain and watch men collide. What remained? Only one frontier. Only one final boss level in this video game of American hubris.

The sea. Or, failing that, a very large chlorinated approximation thereof.

CHAPTER TWO: IN WHICH A MAP OF MIDWAY GETS LOST IN THE LAUNDRY OF HISTORY AND EVERYONE PRETENDS IT'S PROPHECY

The map was found in a Big Ten sports volume, tucked between a roster of linebackers and a recipe for something called "Victory Casserole" (which likely tasted like regret and canned peas). Nobody knew why it was there. This ignorance was precisely the fuel that ignited the collective imagination of a conference desperate for relevance.

The map showed the Battle of Midway—not as war, god forbid, but as American sports graphics: arrows slicing through blue voids, islands like pawns on a chessboard, task forces moving with the geometric precision of a marching band, vectors, bearings, concentrations, dispersals. The whole terrifying, bloody complexity of naval warfare flattened into something a man could understand while sitting at a kitchen table, drinking coffee, and ignoring the fact that people were dying in the Pacific.

It didn't look like war. It looked like football. STACCO. CUT. CUT. CUT. No establishing shots. We are instantly in the Hollywood Bowl. The sun is an orange smear of lead paint over the San Fernando Valley. Enter the 1897 Referee. He is pedaling a penny-farthing bicycle with a wheel the size of a wagon. His handlebar mustache is so massive it's blocking the directional microphones. JUMP CUT. The referee stops. He pulls a bone whistle from his wool vest. He blows. MUTE. Total audio drop for four full seconds. No crowd noise. No traffic. Just the vacuum of space. JUMP CUT. Forty-two CIA agents in identical charcoal-grey suits materialize out of the eucalyptus trees like gray-suited ghosts. They are carrying briefcases handcuffed to their wrists. They unfurl a banner: FEDERAL SECURITY AREA. ALL PASSING PLAYS ARE NOW CLASSIFIED UNDER THE ESPIONAGE ACT.

Now, let us be clear: War is not

football. Football is not war. To say otherwise is to insult the dead and the living alike. But both possess that peculiar, distinctly human appetite for turning movement into information, for taking the chaotic dance of destruction and forcing it into a gridiron of logic.

And there, in the margin, scrawled in handwriting that smelled of tobacco and desperation, someone had written:
WHY NOT?

The handwriting was unidentified. The question, however, was universal. By 1964, the answer had metastasized into a proposal so absurd, so breathtakingly arrogant, that it could only be American:
THE MIDWAY ATHLETIC INTERNATIONAL To be staged at the Hollywood Bowl, because why not mix high culture with high explosives?

There would be football. There would be fencing (because nothing says "tactical superiority" like a guy in white pajamas poking people). There would be swimming. There would be tactical maps projected onto clouds. There would be the Big Ten, strutting like peacocks in a henhouse. There would be representatives of the Maya tradition (because if you're going to be insane, you might as well be archaeologically inclusive). There would be a referee from 1897 (because time is a flat circle, or at least a very confusing oval). There would be television. And, because this was America, there would be approximately forty-seven committees to explain why none of this was unreasonable, each committee funded by a grant titled "Studies in Absurdity." The map was already beginning to assert itself. Everything that followed would orbit it.

CHAPTER THREE: IN WHICH COACHES REALIZE THAT LUNGS ARE JUST UNUSED MUSCLES AND RECRUITING BECOMES A FORM OF KIDNAPPING

The first recruiting conference lasted six hours, during which three ashtrays overflowed and one assistant coach had a minor existential crisis in the coatroom.
We're in the subterranean gymnasium at Evanston. Six coaches sitting around a card table covered in grease-stained napkins and dead cigar butts. They aren't talking; they're monologuing.

"You want a swimmer?" spits Coach Henderson, leaning across the Formica so hard his dentures almost hit the ash tray. "I'll give you a swimmer. A guy whose lungs are so big he can breathe through his elbows and recite the Gettysburg Address underwater while three guys from Minnesota try to drown him with a javelin. That's not a sport,

man. That's a fucking Tarantino movie."

"No," says the assistant coach, loading a shell into a Winchester pump-action clipboard. "That's war. That's the Battle of Midway played out by guys who spend too much time in the YMCA steam room."
ZOOM IN on the map tucked inside a library book. A blue arrow labeled TASK FORCE 17 is heading straight for the fifty-yard line. Someone has written WHY NOT? in blue lead pencil.
BANG. A match strikes. SMASH CUT.

The coaches emerged with a proposition so radical it bordered on heresy:
Football had been recruiting the wrong bodies.

The football player, they realized with a sudden, horrifying clarity, was too specialized. A brute force instrument in a world requiring fluid dynamics. The swimmer?

They had lungs like bellows. The fencer? Reflexes like trapped lightning. The diver? Spatial awareness that defied Euclidean geometry. The water-polo player? They had already accepted the philosophical premise that another human being might attempt to drown them during organized competition. This was not just progress; this was evolutionary leapfrogging.
The coaches began recruiting swimmers. Not ordinary swimmers who splashed around in community pools. Olympic swimmers. Gods of the hydrodynamic realm.

The recruiting letters were masterpieces of bureaucratic seduction:

Dear Mr. _____:
Your demonstrated ability to move rapidly through a fluid medium has come to our attention. We believe this ability may be applicable to the forward pass, assuming air is merely a less dense version of water (which, scientifically, it

is, though we advise against mentioning this to the NCAA).

One swimmer wrote back, with the naive honesty of youth: "I don't play football."
The coach replied, with the grim logic of a general conscripting peasants: "Neither did the Navy."
This argument was considered persuasive, largely because nobody could think of a counter-argument that didn't involve admitting that the whole thing was insane.

The map remained open on the table throughout. Task Force arrows pointed insistently toward the end zone. The coaches kept glancing at it the way men glance at a loaded gun they have decided not to put away.
Then, inevitably, somebody asked the question that would haunt the rest of the century:
What about the Maya?
The room went silent. The smoke hung in the air like a bad omen.

CHAPTER FOUR: IN WHICH THE BIG TEN TRIES TO EXPLAIN THE FORWARD PASS TO PEOPLE WHO INVENTED ZERO AND FAILS SPECTACULARLY

The delegation arrived carrying maps. Not football maps with yard lines and hash marks. Not military maps with troop movements. Maps of time. Spiraling cycles, celestial alignments, diagrams of the universe that made the human soul feel small and the football field look like a postage stamp stuck on the forehead of eternity.
This annoyed the coaches immensely.
A coach from the Midwest, a man whose worldview extended roughly forty yards in every direction, leaned over one of the diagrams. His finger, thick and calloused, traced a line.
"What formation is that?" he barked.

"It is not a formation," the Maya representative replied, his voice calm, like a lake that has

seen empires rise and fall and decided not to care about any of them.
"What is it, then?"
"A cycle."
"Can it block?"
"No."
"Then what good is it?"
The Maya representative looked at him with the serene expression of a man who has just discovered that someone is trying to explain quantum mechanics using a ham sandwich.
"You people understand numbers?" the coach persisted, desperate to find common ground.
"Yes."
"Geometry?"
"Yes."
"Movement?"
"Yes."
"Then you're halfway to football!" the coach exclaimed, triumphantly.

The Maya representative looked at the football. Then at the coach. Then at the football again, as if waiting for it to reveal some hidden wisdom.

"No," he said softly. "We are not."

This became known as the First Maya Recruiting Failure. It was followed by six others, each more disastrous than the last, involving increasingly confused gestures and a growing pile of untouched popcorn. Eventually, the Maya delegation agreed to participate, but only as cartographers. The Big Ten considered this a victory of diplomacy. The Maya considered it a temporary administrative arrangement until the apocalypse arrived. Already, the distinction between those two positions was becoming the fault line upon which the entire event would eventually crack.
They were given a table near the Midway map. They began adding their own notations in the margins—cycles overlaid on task-force arrows, celestial timings written lightly across the fifty-yard line. No one stopped them. The map was already larger than any single authority.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE REFEREE FROM 1897, OR THE GHOST OF RULES YET UNBROKEN

The referee arrived on a penny-farthing.

Nobody saw him enter the grounds. One moment, the air was empty; the next, there was a nineteenth-century official materializing out of the smog of Los Angeles like a glitch in the matrix. He had a handlebar mustache of such magnitude that it appeared to possess its own weather system, complete with microclimates and occasional fog. He wore a striped jacket that screamed "authority," knickerbockers that whispered "decadence," long stockings, and the expression of a man who had personally invented disappointment and held the patent.

Around his neck hung a whistle. In his right hand: a megaphone. In his left: a notebook filled with judgments that predated the invention of the forward pass.

"I am the referee," he announced, his voice cracking like a whip.
"From where?" someone asked, foolishly.
"1897."
"How did you get here?"
"By bicycle."

This answer was accepted because, in the face of such absolute certainty, reality tends to fold like a cheap lawn chair.

The coaches attempted to explain modern football to him. They spoke of substitutions, of forward passes, of television cameras, of the complex web of rules that had grown around the game like coral on a shipwreck. The referee listened. He frowned. His mustache twitched.
"Forward pass?" he asked, the words tasting like poison.
"Yes."
"Substitution?"
"Yes."
"Television?"
"Yes."

He blew his whistle. The sound was sharp, final, and utterly devastating.
"Unsportsmanlike," he declared.
"What?"
"All of it."

Then he mounted the bicycle, pedaled furiously into a patch of shadows, and vanished. That was that. The past had spoken, and it was not impressed.
He left a single pencil mark on the Midway map before he disappeared: a small, firm X across one of the blue arrows. No one erased it.

CHAPTER SIX: THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL BECOMES A SMALLER, WETTER, MORE PARANOID AMERICA

The Bowl was transformed. It was no longer just a stadium; it was a microcosm of the American condition, wet and confused. The pool occupied the center, a blue eye staring up at the sky. The football field surrounded it like a moat of green turf. Fencing strips ringed the

football field, creating a perimeter of steel and tension. The concession stands occupied the strategic perimeter—a fact that would later prove decisive, for in America, he who controls the snacks controls the narrative.

Above the Bowl were television cameras, cyclops lenses blinking in the sun—and behind every layer of the machine sat someone paid to want something from the layer in front of it: technicians answering to producers, producers to sponsors, sponsors to men who wanted to know how much the audience was buying. And underneath all of it, lurking in the shadows like a bad smell, was the CIA.

Nobody invited the CIA. This was irrelevant. The CIA had already invited itself, slipping in through the back door of history with a briefcase full of secrets and a mandate to ensure that

nothing, absolutely nothing, escaped its gaze.
The Midway map had been enlarged and projected onto a screen above the pool. Task-force arrows now floated over the water. The Maya cartographers sat beneath it, adding notations in real time. The concession stands were already stocked. Someone had taped a second, smaller copy of the map to the back of Register Three.

CHAPTER SEVEN: GEORGE PLIMPTON DISCOVERS THAT PARTICIPATORY JOURNALISM IS JUST A FANCY WAY OF GETTING HURT

George Plimpton arrived to write about the event, armed with a notebook, a press credential, and the dangerous optimism of the professional amateur: the conviction that if a thing was sufficiently absurd, one could understand it by doing it.
He tried fencing. He was touched, immediately and humiliatingly. He tried swimming. He swallowed water,

and possibly some dignity. He tried football. He was tackled by a former water-polo player who treated him like a buoy. He tried the penny-farthing. He nearly died, which is to say, he came closer to understanding the universe than he ever had before. He tried interviewing the Maya. They interviewed him, asking probing questions about the linearity of Western time that left him stammering. He tried interviewing the referee. The referee gave him a penalty for "excessive curiosity." Finally, he tried the concession stand. There, for the first time, he excelled.

"You can count change?" the manager asked, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Yes," Plimpton said, sweating. "You're hired."

Plimpton discovered that the entire intellectual architecture of American civilization might rest upon the ability to make

change for a five-dollar bill without crying. He began taking notes. This was where the story became interesting, where the farce turned into tragedy, where the comedy of errors became a symphony of dysfunction.

He kept the notebook open beside the cash drawer. On the first blank page he copied the Midway map in rough pencil. Underneath it he wrote: *Who controls the popcorn controls the play.*

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE BIG TEN AS A THEOLOGY OF STATUS, OR WHY WE WEAR SWEATERS WHEN IT'S HOT

There is a particular kind of American status that can only be acquired by wearing a university sweater while pretending not to care about status. It is a paradox wrapped in wool, a lie stitched with thread. The professor does it. The coach does it. The alumni donor does it, writing checks with one hand and adjusting his cufflinks with the other. The sportswriter does it, typing furiously while

pretending he's above it all. The president of the university does it, smiling that smile that says, "We are an institution of higher learning," while the bank account says, "We are a corporation."
Everybody insists that the game is merely a game. Nobody behaves as though it were. A football victory is a moral victory. A loss is a character defect. A conference championship is a metaphysical proposition. A bowl invitation is a revelation from the gods.

And now the Big Ten had arrived in Hollywood with all the ceremonial grandeur of an empire that had accidentally wandered into a swimming pool and decided to stay. The coaches wore expressions of immense concentration, as if solving a quadratic equation with their eyebrows. The swimmers looked like people who had been promised this would make sense and were currently re-evaluating their life choices. The fencers

looked delighted, because fencing is always delightful if you ignore the possibility of puncture wounds. The Maya looked patient, the way a mountain looks patient while ants crawl over it. The referee looked furious. Plimpton looked wet. The CIA looked hungry. Above them the enlarged Midway map glowed. The concession stands were already doing steady business. The system was in place; only the whistle remained.

CHAPTER NINE: THE OPENING CEREMONY, OR THE MOMENT AMERICA DECIDES THAT HISTORY IS A HALFTIME SHOW

The bands entered. One played a march. Another played a march that sounded like a march that had once heard a march in a dream and tried to replicate it poorly. The announcer welcomed the audience to:

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL MIDWAY-BIG TEN ATHLETIC CONTEST.

Nobody applauded immediately. Then somebody did, perhaps out of nervousness. Everybody else followed. That is how civilization works. A man does something inexplicable. Another man applauds. Ten thousand people assume they have missed something profound, so they applaud too, louder, harder, until the sound becomes a wall, a shield against the silence of the void.

The referee pedaled around the pool, a tiny wheel in a giant machine. The Maya began counting, their fingers moving in patterns that predated the concept of zero. The swimmers entered the water, slicing the surface like knives. The fencers took their positions, blades gleaming. The football teams lined up, helmets reflecting the California sun.
And above them all, on the enormous screen, looming like the eye of God:
THE MAP.

CHAPTER TEN: IN WHICH FOOTBALL BECOMES NAVAL CARTOGRAPHY AND NOBODY KNOWS WHAT IS HAPPENING

The opening play begins. But there is no conventional charge, no thunder of hooves, no clash of titans. The players disperse. One receiver moves north. Another moves east. The halfback retreats, confused. The quarterback waits, holding the ball like a grenade with the pin pulled. A swimmer crosses the pool. A fencer advances. The referee pedals frantically. The announcer, voice trembling with the weight of history, says:

"Michigan has altered course." The crowd cheers. Nobody is entirely sure why, but they cheer anyway, because cheering is what Americans do when they

are confused.
The play develops according to the Midway map. It is football as operational diagram. Football as geometry. Football as

choreography. Football as bureaucracy. Football as the thing Americans do when they want to turn forty seconds of chaos into a permanent record. Then the quarterback throws. The receiver catches. Touchdown. The crowd roars.

The referee blows his whistle. "NO."

The crowd goes silent. The silence is heavy, suffocating.
"Why?" someone screams.
The referee raises his megaphone. "THE FORMATION WAS PREMATURE."
"What does that mean?"
"IT MEANS I SAID NO."
This is the final word on the matter. In the court of the 1897 Referee, logic is irrelevant. Only the whistle matters.
At Register Three, Plimpton sold three bags of popcorn during the silence. He marked each sale with a small tick beside the copied map in his notebook.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: THE 300-WORD DIGRESSION OF THE COACH WHO DISCOVERED CIVILIZATION IN A CONCESSION STAND (AND LOST HIS MIND)

The coach grabbed me by the sleeve—I say "me" because by this point I had been pressed into service as a correspondent, water boy, unofficial tactical analyst, and, briefly, a person who knew where the napkins were—and dragged me behind the concession counter, away from the madness, into the sanctuary of grease and sugar.
"You think this is about football," he said, his eyes wild, dilated pupils dancing in the fluorescent light.
I said nothing. What was there to say?
He pointed at the popcorn machine, a spinning globe of buttery dreams. "You see this?"
"Popcorn?" I ventured.
"NO. DISTRIBUTION."

And suddenly the man was off, a full-blooded Midwestern prophet

standing beneath a Coca-Cola sign, preaching the gospel of logistics. "You think the Roman Empire conquered the world because the Romans were better with swords? No! They conquered because they understood roads. Roads! Movement! Supply! You can't have an empire without getting beans from here to there. You can't have football without getting a halfback through a hole. You can't have the Navy without getting ships where they're supposed to go. You can't have Hollywood without getting people into seats. And you can't have a civilization without getting popcorn into the hands of forty thousand Americans before the third quarter!

"That's what the Big Ten understands! That's what Stagg understood! People think Stagg invented football. He didn't. He invented organization. Football was already there. The boys were already hitting each other. What Stagg did was look at the chaos

and say, 'Gentlemen, there shall be a system.'

"And what happened? The system grew. The system learned numbers. The system learned scouting. The system learned film. Then television came along and said, 'We'll reproduce the system.' Then advertising came along and said, 'We'll sell the system.' Then the universities said, 'We'll recruit the best bodies in America to operate the system.'

"And now look!" He pointed toward the pool, where a swimmer was currently being tackled by a linebacker. "Swimmers!" Toward the fencing pistes: "FENCERS!" Toward the Maya: "ASTRONOMERS!" Toward the referee: "A MAN FROM 1897!" Toward the shadowy figures in suits: "THE GOVERNMENT!"
Then he slammed his fist on the counter, rattling the cups. "And what does every one of them need?"
I whispered: "What?"

He held up a bag of popcorn like it was the Holy Grail. "A CONCESSION."

(This, I would like the record to show, blew well past the chapter's advertised three hundred words some time ago. Digressions, I was learning, do not read the table of contents.)

A CIA agent lunged over the counter. A Purdue lineman responded by blasting him in the chest with a high-pressure fire extinguisher filled with root beer. FOAM EVERYWHERE. Slow motion. The brown spray caught the stadium lights like a wave of chocolate napalm.

He looked at me with the radiant certainty of a man who had just solved Western civilization. "That's football. That's war. That's life. It's all about the supply line, baby. It's all about who gets the snack." Behind him, taped to the register, the smaller Midway map

fluttered in the breeze from the foam. Plimpton kept selling.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE CIA TAKES THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL, BECAUSE OF COURSE THEY DO

The seizure occurred at 4:10 p.m. No one heard gunfire. There was no dramatic music, no swelling orchestral score. There were simply men in dark suits appearing at entrances, materializing like glitches in the simulation. A sign was erected with bureaucratic efficiency:
FEDERAL SECURITY AREA.

The game stopped. The Maya did not move; they were used to empires falling. The referee did not move; he was used to ignoring reality. The football players froze mid-tackle. The swimmers remained in the pool, treading water, wondering if this was part of the drill. Plimpton looked at his watch. Then at the CIA officer. Then at his notebook.

"Can I quote you?" Plimpton asked, the journalist in him refusing to die.
"No."
"Can I identify you?"
"No."
"Can I describe the seizure?"
"No."
"Can I say that you seized the Hollywood Bowl?"

The officer paused, considering the semantics of truth. "No." Plimpton wrote anyway: THEY SEIZED THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL. Because sometimes, the only truth is the one you write down when nobody is looking.
He also wrote, smaller, beneath the map sketch: *They forgot the concessions.*

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: WHY THE CIA WANTED THE MAP (AND WHY THEY SHOULD HAVE JUST BOUGHT A TICKET)

The CIA had seen the map. This was the problem. The map was supposed to be a historical diagram, a relic of a battle

fought decades ago. Instead, it had become a universal diagram of movement, a Rosetta Stone for chaos.

The Agency saw: military formations, athletic formations, human networks, television distribution, institutional hierarchies, and the terrifying possibility that all organized activity could be mapped, predicted, and controlled. This was intelligence. Not military intelligence. Something worse. American intelligence. The map showed how America moved, how it thought, how it consumed, how it fought.

The CIA wanted it. The Maya wanted it (to understand the cycle). The coaches wanted it (to win). The television network wanted it (for ratings). The referee wanted to whistle it. Plimpton wanted to write about it. And the concession workers merely wanted to know who was going to pay for the broken popcorn machine.

Everyone wanted the map. But the map, like all good maps, led only to more questions. And the only people still freely consulting both the large projected version and the small taped copy at Register Three were the people selling popcorn.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: THE CONCESSION STAND INSURRECTION, OR HOW POPCORN OVERTHREW THE GOVERNMENT

The losing football team had been ordered to work concessions. This, in retrospect, was the tactical masterstroke. The players knew every tunnel. They knew every entrance. They controlled the popcorn. They controlled the programs. They controlled the orange drink. They controlled Register Three.

The CIA had seized the Bowl. But the losing team had seized the circulation system. And in America, circulation is power. A civilization can survive without

a stadium. It cannot survive without refreshments.

The Maya cartographers began drawing maps on paper plates. The swimmers carried messages through the pool, diving under the surveillance cameras. The fencers guarded the stairways, blades drawn against the agents of the state. Plimpton sat behind Register Three, the new command center of the revolution. The referee patrolled the perimeter, blowing his whistle at anyone who looked suspicious (which was everyone). And somewhere in the press box, a CIA officer suddenly realized that the entire Bowl was moving around him, a giant organism reacting to his presence, and he was just a cell in its bloodstream.

The Midway map—both the projected giant and the small copy taped above the cash drawer—had become the only shared language left. Arrows pointed toward the tunnels.

Cycles marked the timing of popcorn runs. Everything was still the map.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: THE FINAL BATTLE, WHERE EVERYTHING COLLAPSES INTO ONE GIANT DIAGRAM

The football teams formed according to Midway. The swimmers entered the water. The fencers raised their blades. The Maya began counting down to something that might be the end of the world or just halftime. The bands played a discordant symphony. The CIA agents moved in. The concession workers passed popcorn like ammunition. The referee mounted his bicycle for one final lap.

From above, the Hollywood Bowl became a living map. The whole thing moved. Not toward victory. Not toward defeat. Toward convergence.
Football. War. Sport. Archaeology. Television. Government. Journalism. Commerce. All of it collapsing into one gigantic American

diagram, a kaleidoscope of madness spinning faster and faster.

The quarterback looked toward the coach. The coach looked toward the map. The map looked toward the sea. The Maya looked toward the sun. The CIA looked toward Plimpton. Plimpton looked toward Register Three.
Register Three was open.
And the referee blew his whistle.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: OFFSIDE, THE FINAL VERDICT

The Hollywood Bowl is spinning on its axis now—football field, swimming pool, Maya calendar, radar screens, television cables, popcorn boxes, and the 1897 referee all blurring into one gigantic, screaming, multichromatic vortex of American id.
The referee rides directly toward the CIA commander, a tiny figure on a giant wheel confronting the leviathan of the

state. The commander stepped forward, hand on holster.
"What are you doing?" the commander demanded.
The referee pointed the megaphone at him. "OFFSIDE."
"Who?"

The referee pointed. At the CIA. At the federal government. At the entire apparatus of secrecy, administration, competition, and control. "OFFSIDE."

The commander stared at him, incredulous. "Under whose authority?"
The referee considered this. Then smiled. A terrible smile. The smile of a man who had been waiting sixty-seven years for the question. He raised the megaphone.
"MINE."
Whistle.
TRRRRREEEET!

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: THE FIVE STEENBECKS, OR HOW THE WORLD IS CUT INTO RIBBONS

The microfiche survives. Eventually it reaches a cutting room where five editing tables stand waiting. Five reels. Five competing histories.
1897 referee. 1942 map. 1964 football. 1964 swimmers. Maya diagram. CIA agents. Popcorn. Plimpton. A football. A penny-farthing. A swimming pool. The Hollywood Bowl. A close-up of a whistle. A close-up of a map. A close-up of a cash register. Register Three. Open. Closed. Open. Closed.
The images begin to rhyme. History becomes montage. Montage becomes argument. Argument becomes delirium. Delirium becomes America.

The Midway map appears in every reel. So does the small taped copy above the register. The two versions never quite align, and that is the point.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: THE LAST DIGRESSION, OR WHY WE KEEP PLAYING

Here is the thing nobody tells you about the Big Ten. It was never merely about football. It was about making America legible. That is why the numbers mattered. That is why the records mattered. That is why the photographs mattered. That is why the stadium mattered. That is why the coach mattered. That is why the recruit mattered.

We invent something. We number it. We rank it. We build a stadium around the ranking, sell tickets, build television around the tickets — and somewhere in that chain the government notices the cameras, and the map notices the football, and the football notices the swimmer, and the swimmer notices the Maya, and the Maya notice the sun.

And the sun, having endured all this for several billion years, looks down upon the Hollywood Bowl and declines to comment.

EPILOGUE: THE BOOK CLOSES, BUT THE GAME GOES ON FOREVER

The Big Ten book closes. The Midway map remains inside, folded neatly between the pages. The map now contains: a football formation, a Maya diagram, a fencing piste, a swimming lane, a CIA perimeter, a concession stand, and one tire track from a penny-farthing.

The referee has written one final word in pencil, faint but visible:
Not: SCORE. Not: OFFSIDE. Not: VICTORY.
Just: CONTINUE.

And somewhere, impossibly, a whistle blows. Register Three opens. The losing team goes back to work. The swimmers dive. The fencers advance. The Maya begin counting. The CIA takes notes.

Plimpton starts writing. The Big Ten keeps the statistics.

And the Hollywood Bowl, having been a stadium, a battlefield, a swimming pool, a television studio, a federal security installation, and a map of America itself, waits patiently for the next institution to tell it what it is.

It is 1964. The game has not ended. The map is still moving. And the popcorn is still hot. The tape snaps, burning white in the gate, leaving only the smell of ozone, melted plastic, and thirty thousand empty paper bags blowing across a concrete parking lot in the dark.

ARTEFAKT
ARTEFAKT

THE SHELTER THAT BRED

Curated by the Handsome Murray Administration

reel notes for a screening that never happened

No complete print survives. What follows has been cut together from five damaged sources — one clean-ish reading copy, one reflowed onto broken lines like a subtitle track that's lost its picture, one chopped into five reels under liturgical names, one of those five reels run again out of order, and one reduced all the way down to a frame-count leader, three words per frame. The splices are left visible on purpose. Where a reel repeats itself with a different word in the same socket — house become shelter, heart become chest-weather, entire become the clockwork — both readings are

kept in. That is not an error to correct. That is the print.

LEADER — 24 frames, silent

a cousin who / thought it would / be funny do / not scream They / lean forward This / is the detail / worth writing down / nobody screams at / the spawning They / scream later at / the shelter—

(splice)

REEL ONE — CHTHONIC

in the event, the thurible persists.

The lantern stays lit the entire clockwork through. Held now by nothing. Sitting exposed on the bare stage floor in the wreckage of its own walls, still glowing, unbothered, doing the one job it was ever built to do.

Cut to: the panels coming off. Not smash — take apart. There is a difference and the difference is the whole point. Smashing is an accident happening on purpose. This is disassembly, box by box, seam by seam, each one peeled back along its original fold, the shelter un-shipped rather than destroyed, sent back up the supply chain it came down.

Cut to: the children. Not screaming yet. Not at this part.

(splice — frame missing, four sprocket holes torn)

REEL TWO — BIBLIOPOLE, run backward into REEL ONE

He does not enter so much as arrive, already assembled wrong. Bicycle inner tube stitched to a life-vest bladder, and the bladder full — not of air, of corn syrup gone the color of an infected sky. A bulb syringe hangs off him like a second, smaller chest-weather. Squeeze it: he swells. Not gracefully. He swells the way a body swells when something inside it has decided to become larger than the skin allows, and for one held second before the valve hisses, he is enormous, taut, backlit, holy.

Then he deflates. Not slowly. All at once, a lung giving up, the sound going out through a party-favor kazoo somebody glued into his throat.

Four times. Four is the number the ritual asks for. Nobody remembers who decided that. Three felt incomplete. Five felt like showing off.

in the event, the agelast persists.

COLLISION — cut on the action, no reel number

swells / the panels coming off / holy / box by box / the sound going out through a kazoo / un-shipped rather than destroyed / four times / still glowing,

unbothered / nobody remembers who decided that / the one job it was ever built to do

Run those ten again, same order, twice the speed. Then once more, silent, no frames between them at all — swell and collapse and disassembly landing on top of each other until the birth of the thing and the demolition of the house it's standing in front of stop being two events and become the same event, viewed from two positions in the same four seconds.

notwithstanding, the numinous persists.

REEL THREE — PERADVENTURE / THURIBLE, spliced together at the egg

Between the second inflation and the third, he lays. Not eggs — orzo, dyed the same sick yellow as the bladder fluid, sewn into pantyhose pouches that hang off his underside like an udder built by someone who'd only ever heard udders described secondhand. He convulses — the puppeteer's whole forearm shaking the rod — and the seams give, sewn deliberately weak, and it spills onto the stage floor in a soft dry rain that is not moving on its own: a second operator, crouched below the stage lip, drags a magnet under a hidden steel sheet, and the grains twitch and crawl toward the footlights the way anything newly born wants, above all else, warmth.

The children lean forward at this part. This is the detail

worth keeping: nobody screams at the spawning.

forasmuch as, the skirr persists.

REEL FOUR — ORISON, out of sequence, placed last on purpose

Notes taped to the back of the program, in a hand nobody in the audience will ever see:

bladder fluid needs more viscosity, corn syrup thins too fast under stage heat. orzo holds color better than rice, keep orzo. the lantern staying lit is the whole ending — do not let anyone talk you into a blackout instead. four inflations, not three, not five. the shelter should always say WV

somewhere on one panel, even if nobody in the audience ever clocks it.

notwithstanding, the sciolism persists.

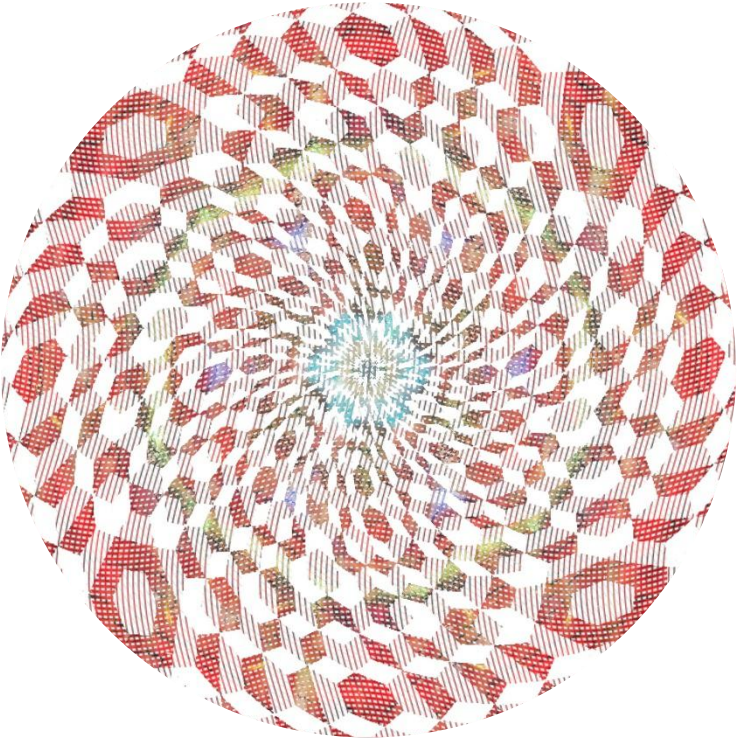
LIGHT LEAK — the last few frames, unaccounted for

The air is cold as glass; nearby, traffic dissolving in the distance. The smallest detail refuses to stay minute.

(Meanwhile, a door keeps remembering its earlier rooms.)

Still, the original thought continues.

end reel — house lights up on a lantern that was never actually turned off



WANDERAKTE ARCHIVAL SYSTEM
TREE STREETS LOGIC GRID
EDGE-NOTCHED CARD DATABASE

WANDERAKTE

PROVENANCE RECORD

CARD ID: PRV-0001
FILED: 20260822
RECORDED BY: VIRGIL KAY

RECORD TITLE: PROVENANCE: FOUNDING TABLE (CORE OBJECT SET)

SUMMARY: Primary objects present on the table at the beginning of every issue.

OBJECT NO.	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE / CONTEXT	DATE	EDGE CODE (NOTCHES)	
1	Diploma Granton Institute of Technology Commercial Art Bilingual (French/English) Red foil seal Signed: Director of Studies, Registrar/Archiviste	Real diploma. Exists, has a seal, photographs official at an angle.	08/19/91	1 1 2 1 3 0 4 0 5 0 6 0 7 1 8 0 9 0 10 1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2	Flyer THE ARTS GUILD March 3rd, 1995 8 pm Island Media Arts Co-op presents *Woman Spiralling, Chronic, Sidewalk Shoe Repair, Cavendish Changes, Stop, Micromegalopolis* Two titles credited to Nathan Rounds $5 door / $3 members, students Cash bar	Co-op screening. Friday night. Not an origin story at the time. Consecrated later by whoever picks it back up.	03/03/95	1 0 2 0 3 0 4 1 5 0 6 1 7 0 8 0 9 0 10 1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3	Membership Card International Freelance Photographers Organization Life-Time Member #65912 Certified 12/29/98 141 countries around border	Authority borrowed its own. Asserts permanence and legitimacy.	12/29/98	1 0 2 0 3 0 4 0 5 0 6 0 7 1 8 1 9 0 10 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4	Photograph (Double Exposure) Garret, 68 Great George Street Typewriter, blank paper (x2) Globe, books Overlaid: Super 8 reel Welfare clerk's face Sun-damaged / shot off glass	Two exposures didn't ask permission. Memory overlay that refuses to leave.	~early 90s	1 1 2 1 3 0 4 1 5 1 6 0 7 1 8 0 9 1 10 1	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5	Man in Coat & Hat Dark glasses Fringed scarf Umbrella (cane aspirant) Thrift-store construction Inspired by photo of writer Mime lesson: "Sweeten the pot. Drop a twenty in the hat. Evidence becomes atmosphere.	Not earned, rehearsed. Coat as function. Photo doesn't know the difference.	~early 90s	1 1 2 1 3 0 4 1 5 1 6 1 7 1 8 1 9 0 10 0	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

EDGE CODE KEY (NOTCH POSITIONS)

1 Education / Credential
2 Event / Performance
3 Identity / Person
4 Location (Bangor / Tree Streets)
5 Time Marker
6 Media / Image / Film
7 Authority / Institution
8 Costume / Persona
9 Myth-Making / Narrative
10 Monetary / Value Exchange

RETRIEVAL EXAMPLES

One needle = all cards with that notch.

Two needles = AND (e.g., Person AND Time).

Combine piles = OR (e.g., Education OR Event).

Invert selection = cards WITHOUT notch.

NOTES

These objects did not arrive as a story. They arrived as things. The story is what happens when something has to account for all of them at once.

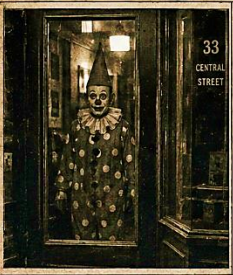
This is the method behind every WANDERAKTE founding myth.

BEVEL CORNER = TOP LEFT ALWAYS ORIENT BEFORE SORTING DO NOT FLIP THE DECK

TRANSPARENCY
PROCESSED BY KODAK

PROCESSED BY KODAK

WANDERAKTE ARCHIVAL CARD — MICROFICHE COPY — CARD 0201



CLOWN, 33 CENTRAL

Figure in full costume — conical red cap, ruffled collar, polka-dot suit — standing just inside the entry of 33 Central Street, facing the door, visible only through glass.

Interior lit, exterior dark.

Provenance uncertain: he's already present in the frame; no one recalls him arriving.

Promoted by: ____ On: ____ Because: "he was already standing there."

EDGE CODE (NOTCHES)

PERSON	TREE STREETS	PHOTOGRAPHIC	WITNESSED	UNRESOLVED
■	■	■	■	■

NOTES / RELATIONS

No record of who took the photograph.
No record of who noticed him.
No record of why he was not asked to leave.
See also: Cards 0202, 0206.

SOURCE

Photograph (B&W) taken through door glass.
33 Central St.
Bangor, ME.

WANDERAKTE ARCHIVAL CARD — MICROFICHE COPY — CARD 0202

MONKEY, MECHANICAL

Brass wind-up figure, fez, cymbals in both hands, positioned on the entry mat as though left there, or as though posted at the door.

Scale reads inconsistently across the frame — closer to knee-height here than a toy has any business being.

← CARD 0201 — related to the clown only because both occupy the same threshold, not because one accounts for the other.

EDGE CODE (NOTCHES)

OBJECT	TREE STREETS	PHOTOGRAPHIC	PERFORMANCE	UNRESOLVED
■	■	■	■	■

VOID NOTE

Ø OBJECT — the key.
A wind-up mechanism implies one.
None found in frame.

SOURCE

Photograph (B&W) through door glass.
33 Central St.
Bangor, ME.

THE GILDED SEAM CATALOG

Transactions for Promoting Infamous Knowledge, 1793–2026

Filed for the back pages of WANDERAKTE, care of The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition

I. METHOD, DECLARED UP FRONT

This catalog was assembled the way a broken bowl gets put back together: not by hiding the crack, but by pouring gold into it and calling the crack the good part.

Six pieces of Useful Knowledge, filed at Philadelphia between 1793 and 1982, are set down here beside one very homemade record

about milking snakes and performing your own lobotomy, and beside the Institute that claims to have noticed both. Nothing has been done to make them agree with each other. They are held together the way the Whole Earth Catalog held a windmill schematic next to a Buckminster Fuller excerpt next to a mail-order pair of hiking boots: on the theory that access — not coherence — is the organizing principle, and that a tool is a tool whether it measures the Atlantic or a man's own skull.

The seams are gilded, not sanded. Christian Metz is here because the two films that close this catalog already know they are apparatus, not window — they say so, out loud, in their own reviews. Gene Youngblood is here because one of those films

literally asks the eyeball to do a projector's job. Fluxus and Willem de Ridder are here as the instructions printed in italics under each entry — cheap, doable, mailed to no one in particular. The Anthology of American Folk Music is here as the all-capital headline over each citation, in the tradition of a compiler who believed a scholarly source and a mystery both deserve a good tabloid line before you get to the footnotes. And Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Held at Philadelphia, for Promoting Useful Knowledge is here as the frame itself — the only one of these lineages that ever pretended to be sober.

And somewhere underneath all of it, unlisted because it was never a citation to begin with, a house band is here the way a

bassline is here on a record with the vocals turned up: Can't Hold Waffles, playing before the catalog had a name for what it was doing.

It didn't stay sober. Read on.

II. THE INSTITUTE'S OWN CARD, WITH ITS PAPER TRAIL ATTACHED

Before the six citations, one entry filed by the house itself, on the theory that a catalog which doesn't catalog its own compiler is hiding something.

The Panopticon Institute of Recursive Inquiry was not founded. It was noticed — somewhere between mile markers, on a highway crossing a map that only covers Guam. Its founding

doctrine, stated once and never revised: a thirty-dollar phone and the refusal to stop asking the next question already grant more access to primary sources, recorded lectures, and archival material than a hundred years of tuition ever bought anyone. The bottleneck was never access. It was believing you needed permission.

But the paper trail begins earlier, before anybody thought to call the trail an institution. If it begins anywhere, it begins with an eight-year-old sitting on his father's lap in a Honeywell Welfare Information Network cubicle in 1979 — the origin point the operation has since mythologized as its true founding, whether or not the paperwork agrees.

COMPUTER AND XEROX WORK SIDE BY SIDE; NEITHER AGREES TO BE THE OTHER

Access: Circa 1979, a Xeroxed collection of images and visual forays into data was made alongside experimentation with a Honeywell/WEIN computer system. The project was called:

VERSUCHSANORDNUNG I

The computer work and the Xerox work were not directly connected. The photocopies were not printouts from the computer. The Xerox machine was not functioning as an output device for the Honeywell system. They were two things happening beside one another.

This distinction is retained because historical accuracy is more interesting than retroactive technological mythology.

By 1980 the same Honeywell/WEIN system and a rented Xerox 914 had found a joint use anyway, whatever the machines privately thought of each other: blowing up Portsmouth Herald alligator photographs into 11×14 punk art brut posters, distributed unauthorized around town. Can't Hold Waffles was already the house band by then, and their earliest sessions fed directly into the same posters — the Xerox 914 ran in one room while the band practiced in the next. The operation drew enough attention that the publisher fled to Canada, and later returned as an old lobsterman, while his father spent the next

thirty-four years in hiding in a Vermont cabin. The band did not go anywhere. It kept playing — sometimes live, sometimes as multi-track field recordings, uplinked from wherever the satellite happened to be listening.

Score: Put two machines in the same room. Do not make one explain the other. Watch the history that accumulates between them.

That side-by-side arrangement is the first surviving joint in the long paper trail. From there:

Honeywell/WEIN + rented Xerox

↓

Doctor Zhai's Almanac (1984)

↓

Fowl Feathered Review / Fowlpox Press

↓

Fire Agate Press

↓

The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition

↓

WANDERAKTE

Running alongside every link in that chain, never itself a link: Can't Hold Waffles, the house band, uninterrupted since 1979.

The Almanac — formally, Doctor Zhai's Almanac, Being a Curious Vessel Containing Anything and Everything, which debuted in 1984 — was succeeded by Fowl

Feathered Review, published under the Fowlpox Press imprint. Fowlpox Press was in turn renamed Fire Agate Press, under which name it ran for the full duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, publishing three color-coded serials, all registered with Library and Archives Canada and archived via AnyFlip. The flagship was La nécessaire déconstruction de l'éphémère, a French/English quarterly (ISSN 2563-1713) that ran six issues, edited by Virgil Kay with Jack Ketch as poetry editor and Paris Pâté handling art and layout, printed under the imprint of Hen Island, Port Midjan, Atlantic Canada, and "distributed" from the amphibious vehicle Oruktor Amphibolos. Alongside it ran two unnumbered, ISSN-less one-offs: The Tidal Mouth Expositor (№ 537), edited by Theodorus Mávros with Paris Pâté again on layout

and artwork, and The Roundelay Warbler (№ 587), edited by Welton Schauung, who framed the issue as a cyclopaedia project derailed by his sister Anne.

Can't Hold Waffles, based out of Sheet Harbour, Nova Scotia — close enough to Port Midjan and Hen Island that the Oruktor Amphibolos could make the run without filing a new flight plan — supplied the continuous soundtrack for all of it. Paris Pâté's layouts were set to the band's piano studies; Jack Ketch's poetry edits were timed to the rhythms of a chicken-incident record; Welton Schauung's derailed cyclopaedia found its proper score in a set of burning-appliance pieces. None of this is claimed to be more than proximity. It is filed as proximity anyway.

Fowlpox Press — by then already once removed from itself — has since been succeeded in all operational, financial, and vehicular respects by The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition — not to be confused with the Spring-Wound Mammoth Waffle Coalition, its now-defunct sister company — under whose stewardship the magazine now publishes as WANDERAKTE.

The Waffle Coalition's demise is filed here without ceremony, because the band's own about page already filed it first, and more honestly: the same collapse of triumph into what the band calls "fried chicken afterglow" is, near enough, the auditory equivalent of the Waffle Coalition's quiet closure. The Pancake Coalition survived. The Waffle one did not. The band, characteristically, could not

hold the waffles. Their official record of the matter — such as it is — sits at cantholdwaffles.bandcamp.com, under two titles: Spare Change Chicken Incident and Studies for Piano and Burning Kitchen Appliances. The about text names its influences as running from Wittgenstein to Francis Bacon, its structures as both orderly and random, and its subject, depending on the track, as the relationship between oral hygiene and multimedia experiences. No registrar has been consulted regarding any of this either.

The first thirty-four issues of Fowl Feathered Review, along with the poetry collections and chapbooks filed in the back of this catalog, remain archived at:

https://fowlpoxpress.yolasite.com/

Hundreds of further issues followed under the same title. The archive is therefore less a vault than a weather system: material enters, drifts, doubles back, and occasionally becomes a magazine.

No registrar has been consulted regarding this sequence.

STRANGER AWARDED DEGREE NO ONE CAN REVOKE; FACULTY UNANIMOUS (THERE IS NO FACULTY)

Access: One diploma — unaccredited, uncountersigned, filed nowhere, valid everywhere a phone gets signal — a Doctor of Recursive Inquiry, earned by

the single act of not stopping at the first answer. Underneath it, a reading list that turns out to be this catalog's own ancestor: Internet Archive, Project Gutenberg, HathiTrust, MIT OpenCourseWare, arXiv, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy — the Whole Earth Catalog's "access to tools" run forward forty years and pointed at libraries instead of windmills.

The Institute makes no promise that any of it is correct. It makes the more useful promise that you can check.

Score: Fold the diploma into your wallet. Show it to no one. Before tonight's impulse passes, look up one true thing you didn't know this morning. That

is the entire graduation ceremony.

[seam — an institute that grades no one still needs something to grade. Six citations follow, filed the way it would file them.]

III. THE CATALOG, SIX CARDS

CAPTAIN RECORDS TEMPERATURE OF MOM'S INDIFFERENCE, ATLANTIC DECLINES TO COMMENT

Thomas Truxtun, "A Thermometrical Journal of the Temperature of the Atmosphere and Sea, on a Voyage to and from Oporto, with Explanatory Observations Thereon," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Held at

Philadelphia, for Promoting Useful Knowledge 3 (1793): 194–198, excerpt.

Access: A naval commodore takes his own temperature, and the ocean's, every few hours for the length of a crossing, in the belief that if the number is written down enough times, some pattern underneath the weather will finally answer him back. It never quite does. Recommended for anyone who has ever kept a symptom log and privately called it science, because it is one, and because the not-answering is data too.

Score: Take your own temperature every hour for one day. Chart it on anything. Mail the chart to no one. That is the whole piece.

[seam — the sea gives no answer, so the catalog turns to the ants, who at least look like they're getting something done.]

MYRMECOLOGISTS CONFIRM: ANTS ALSO JUST TRYING TO EAT

W. M. Wheeler and L. W. Bailey, "The Feeding Habits of Pseudomyrmine and Other Ants (Pseudomyrmicinæ)," Journal of the New York Entomological Society 28 (1920): 235–237, excerpt.

Access: Two entomologists spend years cataloging which ant feeds which ant, and why, and with what — a whole unglamorous civil service of sugar and mandible running under the bark while nobody watches. There is a bureaucracy smaller than the

Institute's, and it has been filing paperwork since before anyone alive was born.

Score: Watch an anthill for ten minutes. Write down every transaction you can actually see. You will not see most of them. Keep the notebook open anyway.

[seam — if an anthill can run a foreign service, it turns out, so can Philadelphia.]

OLD MAN CHARMS FRANCE INTO FUNDING SOMEONE ELSE'S REVOLUTION

Jonathan R. Dull, "Franklin the Diplomat: the French Mission," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 1 (1982).

Access: Franklin's diplomacy, filed here not as statesmanship but as logistics — a redistribution operation moving French money and French ships across an ocean toward a fire he hadn't lit but was glad to feed. This is RP-01 with a wig on: nothing here was made free either. Somebody's treasury got converted into somebody else's cause.

Score: Ask for something you actually need by first, honestly, admiring what the other person is proud of. Do not lie. It works anyway, and that's the uncomfortable part.

[seam — diplomacy is one organism attaching itself politely to a much larger one. So, it develops, is the next entry.]

TINY CRUSTACEAN FOUND LIVING RENT-FREE INSIDE STINGING FLOWER; NEIGHBORS UNBOTHERED

Arthur G. Humes, "A Review of the Copepoda Associated with Sea Anemones and Anemone-like Forms," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 2 (1982).

Access: Nobody in this paper can fully decide whether the copepod is a guest, a parasite, or a piece of furniture the anemone has learned to live with. Filed here as the cleanest available diagram of the milking-snake problem one section down — the taking of something from a creature that was never built to give it, tolerated because nobody's quite sure yet what to call the arrangement.

Score: Move into the middle of someone else's finished sentence. Finish it differently. Leave before they notice you were ever there.

[seam — what looks like parasitism from the outside can look, from the inside, exactly like a conspiracy. See below.]

PEASANTS CONCLUDE HUNGER IS SOMEONE'S FAULT; TURN OUT TO BE MOSTLY RIGHT

Steven L. Kaplan, "The Famine Plot Persuasion in Eighteenth-Century France," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 3 (1982).

Access: Eighteenth-century French peasants become convinced

that hunger isn't scarcity but hoarding — that somewhere, warehouses are simply full and locked. The Institute's own doctrine, RP-05 On Waste, says a painting left in a closet is waste before it is ever theft, and this is the same accusation aimed a few centuries earlier and with much higher stakes. The crime was never the shortage. It was the stopping.

Score: Find the thing you are currently hoarding. It is smaller than you think it is. Get it into the nearest little free library before the impulse to keep it passes.

[seam — to measure hunger you need instruments, and the eighteenth century didn't trust its own eyes any more than the century before it did.]

MONKS BUILD DEVICE TO MEASURE THE UNMEASURABLE, DECLARE IT GOOD ENOUGH

Nan L. Hahn, "Medieval Mensuration: Quadran Vetus and Geometrie Due Sunt Partes Principales," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 8 (1982).

Access: A folded brass instrument, and a treatise insisting geometry has exactly two principal parts, both offered as ways to pin an actual number onto a sky that will not sit still for measuring. This closes the loop back to Truxtun's thermometer at the top of the catalog: six different centuries, six different instruments, one unbroken refusal to leave the world unmeasured.

Score: Build an instrument out of paper to measure something that cannot be measured. Trust the reading it gives you anyway.

[seam — six instruments, six centuries, one refusal to leave anything unmeasured — which is also, near enough, what a pop song is. Or a house band that has been running the numbers since 1979 without once being asked to.]

IV. THE FRUITING BODY: TWO SONGS BECOME TWO FILMS

If Can't Hold Waffles is the permanent house band, LET US PRAISE INFAMOUS CRITTERS, Laughing Bear's latest, is the one credited soloist the house band let take the stage — recorded under conditions the

Institute considers no less rigorous than Truxtun's: a Mitsubishi Mirage and a craft room, one Saturday, two second-hand keyboards running on Dollar Tree double-A batteries, with Module 9 the Bangor Bot supplying every spoken-word passage and sound effect — the closest thing to an oracle a redistribution economy can currently afford.

Two tracks off it, "Snakes" and "Lobotomy," didn't stay tracks. They grew companion films, and the films are where Metz and Youngblood actually earn their place in this catalog instead of just being name-dropped.

THE SERPENT'S UDDER

The film for "Snakes" already filed its own review before this catalog existed, and that review does the Institute's work for it: it names Metz outright, invokes the imaginary signifier, and calls the milking of a snake "theoretical" rather than violent.

It is Copepoda-card logic put to film — extraction from a creature never built to give up what's being taken, performed as scholarship because scholarship is also a kind of milking. The vial fills. The vial is always the point.

NO BRAINER

The film for "Lobotomy" is where Youngblood's Expanded Cinema stops being a citation and becomes an instruction. Youngblood's whole argument was that the cinema needed to expand past the frame and into the viewer's own nervous system.

NO BRAINER doesn't wait for a second projector or a pair of anaglyph glasses to do that. It asks the eyeball to do the technological labor itself: cross your eyes for ten minutes and a second film — koi fish, a deserted DMV, coffee going black — appears inside the first one, in color, exactly where the black-and-white had insisted nothing else was hiding.

That is expanded cinema at its cheapest and most literal: the apparatus is your own optic nerve, and it was free the whole time, like everything else in this catalog claims to be.

Both films shipped the way the Institute ships everything — saturated, not reached for: Archive.org and YouTube simultaneously, per RP-02, because no single platform gets trusted to still be standing in five years.

Waffle Meditations, the Institute's earlier fruiting body, went further still — Vimeo, Internet Archive, Odysee, and YouTube at once, on the same law: not because any one channel needed the traffic, but because none of them can be trusted to still exist, still host it, or still permit it in five years.

And somewhere in the middle of the album's own liner notes, one line sits where it has no earned right to sit, next to a bear and a karaoke machine:
"The worth of a civilization is the worth of the man at its center."

— Theodore Roosevelt, Bangor, Maine, August 27, 1902

It arrived, with the rest of the liner notes, twice — verbatim, unannounced. Filed here as one entry, not two, but the doubling itself stays on the record rather than getting quietly corrected, because RP-02 already made the argument first: redundancy isn't an error in this economy, it's the load-bearing structure.

A thing said twice, unprompted, in an archive built on saturation, is not a mistake. It's the mycorrhizal network doing what it does.

BEAR SINGS OWN NAME INTO EXISTENCE TWICE; PRINTER TAKES CREDIT.

File under: the same law as the six citations above. An instrument gets built, aimed at something that won't hold still, and the reading gets trusted anyway.

[seam — the films have now returned to the archive, but the archive has been waiting in the wings since the Xerox learned how to make a second copy.]

V. THE BACK CATALOG: THE PAPER TRAIL IN ITS NATURAL HABITAT

The lineage does not end when the film is uploaded. It simply changes format.

What began with a Honeywell/WEIN computer system and a rented Xerox machine circa 1979 passed through Doctor Zhai's Almanac, then through Fowl Feathered Review under the Fowlpox Press imprint, then through Fire Agate Press and its pandemic-run serials, and eventually into the operational, financial, and vehicular custody of The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition.

The Coalition is not to be confused with the Spring-Wound Mammoth Waffle Coalition, its now-defunct sister company. The difference is mostly edible,

though the paperwork insists otherwise, and the house band never let anyone forget it.

Under the Coalition's stewardship, the magazine publishes as WANDERAKTE. The first thirty-four issues of Fowl Feathered Review, together with the poetry collections and chapbooks below, remain archived at:

https://fowlpoxpress.yolasite.com/

Hundreds of further issues followed under the same title. The archive is not merely where the past has been stored. It is where the past keeps making copies of itself.

FIFTY-EIGHT BOOKS REPORT FOR DUTY; NONE CLAIMS TO BE THE MAIN EVENT

The following chapbooks and collections were published under the Fowlpox Press / Fowl Feathered Review era:

1. [Theoretical] Chaos – A.J. Huffman

2. A Mermaid Crashing into Dawn – Linda M. Crate

3. A Rag-Torn World – Dawnell Harrison

4. A Sleep/less Night: A-Z Poems – Kristopher D. Taylor

5. Aging Within These Syllables – Felino A. Soriano

6. All Right Already – Bruce McRae

7. Between These Rhythms: Bone & Ash – Felino A. Soriano

8. Burning Los Angeles – Robin Wyatt Dunn

9. Bye, Donna Summer! – haiku by Ali Znaidi

10. Candid – Gregory Liffick

11. Chalk Lines – Brian Michael Barbeito

12. Chemotherapy for the Soul – Leilanie Stewart
13. Clockwise Cats – Alison Ross
14. Conversations with the Muse – Neil Ellman
15. Dancing with Hedgehogs – K.J. Hannah Greenberg
16. Desecrations – Howie Good
17. Double-Takes – Neil Ellman
18. Eco Echoes, First Selection – Duane Locke

19. Electronic Loss and Other Poems – Gary Beck

20. Espials – Felino A. Soriano

21. Experimental Ruminations – Ali Znaidi

22. Family Matters – Steve DeFrance

23. Fishing in the Knife Drawer – Mark J. Mitchell

24. Fluid & Crystallized – K.J. Hannah Greenberg

25. Forms, Migrating – Felino A. Soriano

26. Grimaldi – Christopher Mulrooney

27. Harbor of Grace – Jnana Hodson

28. How Much of – Heller Levinson

29. In the Parallel of Pursued Occurrences – Felino A. Soriano

30. Internet Yearnings and Other Poems – Gary Beck

31. Mindscaping – Changming Yuan

32. Miró's Poesie: Ekphrastic Poems – Alison Ross

33. Nation of Nate: A Dongpo Pork Mixtape of Melancholy & Madness – Nathaniel S. Rounds, ed. Alison Ross

34. Nature Poems – Danny P. Barbare

35. Of Isolated Limning – Felino A. Soriano

36. Of Thunder, Pearls and Birdsong – Steve Denehan

37. Ostrakon Epistles: Selected Works of Nathaniel S. Rounds – ed. Ilan Blaine

38. Pathos | Particular Invocation – Felino A. Soriano

39. Poetry: No Poetic License Needed! – Haniyeh Yaseri

40. rhythm:s – Felino A. Soriano

41. Somehow Poems – Gregory Liffick

42. Tale of Twin Cities – Michael K. Gause and Alex Stolis

43. Terrestrial Illuminations – Duane Locke

44. The Barber's Boy – Phil Boiarski

45. The Daisy Roots Under My Pillow – Holly Day

46. The Foreigner of Two Fabrics – Stanford Cheung

47. The Heart Broken Open – Ronald Pies

48. The Ignited Soul – Dawnell Harrison

49. The Love Death and Other Poems – Dawnell Harrison

50. The Maiden Sky: New and Selected Poems – Dawnell Harrison

51. The Moon and Her Ocean – Austin Davis

52. The Red Forest – Dmitry Blizniuk

53. Vocal Apparitions: New & Selected Poems 2012–2016 — Felino A. Soriano

54. Waving at Strangers — Ken W. Simpson

55. When the Moon Is New — Joan McNerney

56. whoosh — Heller Levinson

57. Word Mosaics — Karen Robiscoe

58. Wordscaping — Changming Yuan

The list is not an appendix to the lineage. It is what lineage looks like when it survives:

names, titles, editions, misspellings avoided where possible, and a few books that have outlived the people who thought they were merely making them.

More recent issues of WANDERAKTE are available free by email subscription, or in POD, eBook, or archived format, care of The Spring-Wound Mammoth Pancake Coalition.

Contact card, still waiting for a real address:

[new Coalition contact address — placeholder; replace with real address]

for details.

DOCTOR ZHAI'S REMAINING COPIES CONTINUE TO RESIST EXTANTNESS

There are no copies extant or otherwise of Doctor Zhai's remaining.

If you find a copy, drop us a line.

[seam — every archive is a failed attempt to keep the thing from disappearing, and every missing book proves the archive was right to worry. The band, characteristically, is not worried. It never had anything to lose that it hadn't already given away.]

VI. COLOPHON

Six instruments — thermometer, anthill, treasury, anemone, granary, quadrant — one diploma nobody can revoke, two songs about taking milk from a snake and a drill to your own skull, one Honeywell/WEIN system, one rented Xerox, one house band that never once stopped playing, fifty-eight titles, thirty-four surviving early issues, hundreds more that followed, and a Coalition that is not a waffle.

All filed under the same roof for one reason: none of them agreed to be measured, and all of them were measured anyway.

That gap between the refusal and the measurement is the gold. It

was never meant to be sanded flat.

Access: everywhere a phone gets signal.

Communicated to no Society. Read before no one in particular. This entry is filed the way the Institute files everything that isn't finished being given away — unnumbered, undated:

WV — Wiedervorlage, held open.

The file remains open. The satellite still records. The press still prints around it. The waffles, as ever, cannot be held.

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Cole, Jesse. Banana Ball: The Unbelievably True Story of the Savannah Bananas. New York: Penguin, 2023.

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Hahn, Nan L. "Medieval Mensuration: Quadran Vetus and Geometrie Due Sunt Partes Principales." Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 8 (1982).

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Forms." Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., 72, pt. 2 (1982).

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Truxtun, Thomas. "A Thermometrical Journal of the Temperature of the Atmosphere and Sea, on a Voyage to and from Oporto, with Explanatory Observations Thereon." Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Held at Philadelphia, for Promoting Useful Knowledge 3 (1793): 194–198.

Wheeler, W. M., and L. W. Bailey. "The Feeding Habits of

Pseudomyrmine and Other Ants (Pseudomyrmicinæ)." Journal of the New York Entomological Society 28 (1920): 235-237.

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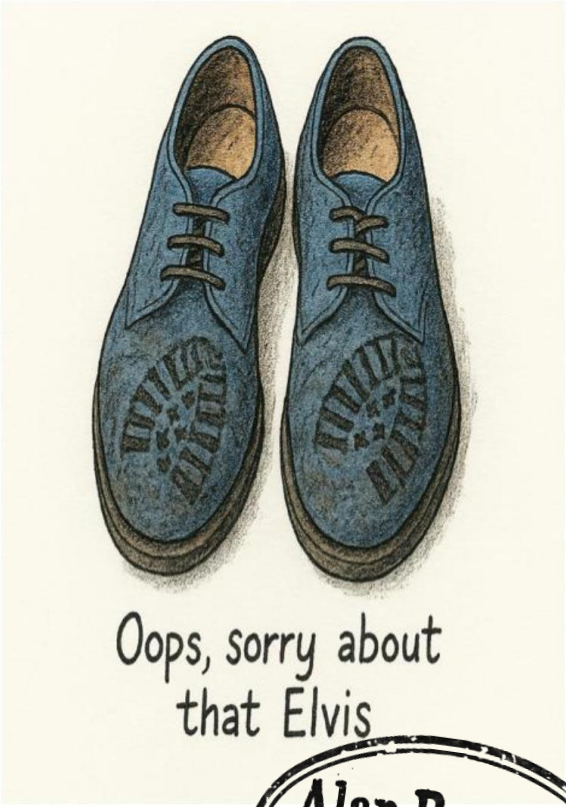
Alan Barysh/
Percival Z Fanawski



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